



24th June 2008

Media Response

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) response to the DCSF permanent and fixed term exclusion statistics 2006 – 2007

While it is positive that the permanent exclusion statistics for 2006 – 2007 have decreased from those for 2005 – 2006, the percentage of excluded pupils in the school population remains the same at 0.12%. In addition, the figures for fixed period exclusions have risen from 389,560 in 2004 - 2005 to 425,600.

It is the most vulnerable children who are being excluded. Children with a special educational need (SEN) are now nine times more likely to be permanently excluded than their peers without SEN (last year children with SEN were three times more likely to be excluded).

Simon Hepburn, Chief Executive of The Advisory Centre for Education said:

'It is not acceptable that the most vulnerable children in our society are being excluded from schools. 75% of children in pupil referral units have special educational needs. Early intervention must take place so that children receive the support they need and situations do not spiral out of control. Exclusion is not a solution, it should only ever occur after all other strategies have been pursued.'

While the Government may say that numbers of excluded pupils are decreasing, the real issues around exclusion are not being dealt with.

The DCSF estimates that every excluded pupil costs around £6,500 more to educate than those educated in schools. New Philanthropy Capital estimates that the average excluded child costs society £63,851 and is more than twice as likely to be involved in crime and three times more likely to leave school without qualifications. With figures like these it is crucial that Government does more to address the needs of children, so that fewer schools resort to exclusion.

The Advisory Centre for Education provides free, independent advice for parents on exclusion. Parents should text the phrase AskACE to 68808 or call 0808 800 0327 for advice.

ENDS

For further information and interviews please contact Jenny Robottom on 0207 704 3386 / 07813 610 965 or email jenny.robottom@ace-ed.org.uk

Alternatively please contact Beverley Russell on 0207 704 3371 or email Beverley.russell@ace-ed.org.uk

Notes to Editor:

- 75% of children in pupil referral units have a special educational need from DCSF *Back on Track*, May 2008

The Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) is an independent advice centre for parents of children aged 5 – 16 in state funded education. ACE aims to provide the information, support and high quality legal advice that parents need to help their children at school, particularly when there are problems.

ACE's perspective is informed by the nearly 7,500 calls received on our telephone advice lines in 2006 – 2007. We deliver training to educational professionals including admissions staff and appeal panel members and personnel. ACE produces a wide range of publications and has an influential membership scheme. Founded in 1960, ACE is a registered charity.